

NATIONAL REGISTER

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Government/County Courthouse
Government/City Hall
Government/correctional facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Government/County Courthouse
Government/Government Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival
other: Eclectic

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation terra cotta
walls terra cotta
roof ceramic tile
other cast iron grilles

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SUMMARY:

The Maricopa County Courthouse and Phoenix City Hall, sometimes known as the County-City Administration Building, is a monumentally-scaled building constructed in 1928-1929 on a full city block in the center of downtown Phoenix, Arizona. Constructed as a joint effort of Maricopa County and the City of Phoenix, the structure served in two capacities and is essentially two functionally separate buildings integrated into a single design. Stylistically, the courthouse is an eclectic blending of numerous Neoclassical and Period Revival forms that are combined into a symmetrical composition which reflects several elements common to the late 1920s. In its downtown location, the building is located between two major east-west thoroughfares and is adjacent to the modern Maricopa County and City of Phoenix administration complexes constructed in the 1960s and several high-rise commercial structures.

Exterior Description:

The building has an H-shaped plan with overall dimensions of approximately 130' x 230'. Dominating the building is a six-story central block with seven pronounced vertical bay divisions. Projecting four-story, three-bay-wide wings flank the main block on the east and west sides and are connected to the main block by single-bay connecting wings. The result is a structure that presents a wide and imposing facade to the major streets on the north and south. It is the north (Washington Street) facade that contains the main entry to the county portion of the building and therefore functions as the dominant elevation.

The building is constructed of poured-in-place concrete and utilizes a conventional concrete frame. The exterior surface is clad in rusticated terra cotta panels of variegated colors that

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simulate a yellow sandstone and create the appearance of a masonry structure. Other materials include polished Texas granite, red clay roofing tiles, cast iron window surrounds, and cast iron grillwork and bronze ornamentation within the two formal entrances. The windows proper are simple steel casement sash with varying multi-paned configurations. The variety of window framing patterns, which utilize stylistic vocabulary from several periods, and changes in materials create a sculptural effect in the exterior design.

Although the building is dominated by the mass of a vertical central core, its exterior embellishment and sheathing create a pronounced emphasis on horizontality. The structure sits on a raised foundation story of evenly coursed terra cotta panels. This level has evenly spaced rectangular window openings that have no ornamentation. The uppermost band of this course is beveled at the top edge, creating a water table between this lower foundation segment and the wall segment above. The cornerstone is located in the foundation level at the northeast corner of the building.

The upper half of the building's base level consists of coursed terra cotta panels, with the panels laid in a running bond pattern. Evenly spaced window openings at this level also have no articulation. The second level rises to a stringcourse and is topped by a single course of terra cotta terminating in a projecting rounded molding that serves as a sill course connecting the base of the windows of the second story. Also on the main facade, the three main bays of the projecting wings are connected by common projecting balconies supported on curved brackets. The balustrades of these balconies are comprised of a double band of circular forms.

The lower foundation level of the north elevation contains the formal entrance to the building. Approached by a monumental flight of granite steps, the entry is set within a round arch. The opening is flanked by fluted pilasters of polished granite, which have stylized capitals featuring a raised chevron design. The arch itself is topped by radiating voussoirs. The entire entry is then flanked by raised piers terminating in curvilinear console brackets, each of which has a suspended iron sconce. Above the arch is the inscription "MARICOPA COUNTY COURT HOUSE." The entry proper consists of a pair of bronze doors with full glass panels; above the door is a field of ornamental ironwork.

The upper two stories are the most ornamental. They display a third masonry expression of terra cotta panels set in a randomly

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coursed ashlar pattern. Scattered panels are of slightly contrasting colors that create a variegated effect. The upper wall segments feature two-story, vertical-bay divisions, each separated by a raised pier topped by a console bracket identical to those found in the main entry. On the seven prominent bays of the main block, the bays rise to a segmental arch with radiating voussoirs, again repeating the entry design elements. With these bays, the spandrel panels and the arched areas exhibit a raised floral design. The window bays create a Neoclassical expression that is based more on the form of the composition than on any particular detail.

On the flanking wings, the two-story bays rise to an archivolt molding with a chevron pattern, and the bays are again flanked by piers and console brackets. At the second level, on the side wings, the windows are framed by cast iron surrounds that are a signature detail of the building. This detail is the one element which lends a Southwestern image to the courthouse. The side wings have flat roofs, and the roof lines are articulated by terra cotta copings with floral motifs at regularly spaced intervals.

The two top stories form a large interior tower that rises from the central mass of the main structure. This section is also divided into seven vertical divisions by the continuation of the piers from the lower stories of the facade. These piers also project above the roof line, terminating in a console-shaped motif. Each pier also displays a floral medallion just below the eave line. The corners of this upper-facade section are beveled, which further sets off this upper area from the main structure and adds a vertical emphasis to the central portion of the building. In contrast to the side wings, the central mass has a hipped roof sheathed with clay tiles. (Historic documentation indicates that seven colors of tiles were used on the roof. This is no longer evident, probably as a result of soiling.)

The two upper stories, which contain the jail, have different window treatments. The fifth floor openings are infilled with a honeycomb pattern of circular tiles and the openings are framed with cast iron surrounds similar to those on the main windows of the second story. The sixth story has conventional steel frame windows. Openings on both of these upper stories are flanked by the vertical piers.

The other primary facade of the building, the west facade, faces onto Second Avenue. This facade contains the main entrance to the

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city portion of the building. This entrance is centered along the nine-bay wall and, as the county entrance, is approached by a monumental flight of stairs leading to a recessed arched opening. The arch is flanked by terra cotta sculptures of the mythological phoenix bird, which rose from the ashes of an earlier civilization. The wall adjacent to the entry doors is entirely of polished granite, and the paired, multi-paneled solid doors are of bronze. Above the arch, the words "PHOENIX CITY HALL" are inscribed in raised letters.

The south and east elevations of the building are identical in detailing, design, and fenestration to the north and west elevations. Supplementary entrances are centered along both walls, and various service entries and facilities are located along the south wall.

Interior Description

The interior of the building is equally as elaborate in detail as the exterior; numerous materials are utilized. As suggested by the H-shaped design, the floor plan functions around a longitudinal corridor running east and west through the building. There is a grand entrance foyer behind the entrance to the county portion of the building. This foyer, a grand semi-circular stairway to the second story, and the adjoining public hallways have wainscots of Italian Montenele marble. Other wainscoting and base trim are of pink Tennessee marble, trimmed with Belgian black marble. Window sills throughout the building are also of Tennessee marble. Even the rest room areas feature gray Alaskan marble. Paneling and other woodwork found throughout the office areas and courtrooms is Philippine mahogany.

The detailing of the interior is in a sharp stylistic contrast with the exterior. The main first-floor lobby and hallways are ornamented with Spanish Colonial Revival details, most notably the stenciled beams on the ceilings of the hallway and lobby area. Unfortunately, most of the original ceilings are covered with suspended acoustical panels, resulting from insensitive remodelings over the years. Fire-rated doors have also been installed in various corridors. Some original areas have been reconfigured to create additional rooms. Most of this renovation work is reversible; the original ceilings and marble wainscots are still present, although in some areas they have been obscured. Many significant spaces remain unchanged. The courtrooms are predominantly intact and are still in use.

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Integrity

In spite of the interior modernizations previously mentioned, the building exhibits an extremely high degree of integrity. The exterior is essentially unaltered from the date of construction and most of the interior modifications are reversible. Some minor changes have been made to the landscaping of the site, but the basic setting of the Maricopa County Courthouse, in its prominent downtown Phoenix location, remains unchanged.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Politics/Government

Architecture

Period of Significance

1928-1938

Significant Dates

1929

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Edward F. Neild

Lescher & Mahoney

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SUMMARY

The Maricopa County Courthouse and Phoenix City Hall, commonly known as the Maricopa County Courthouse, was constructed in 1928-1929. It is significant under National Register criterion "A" for its association with the development and maturation of local government in Arizona. Constructed as a joint facility for the City of Phoenix and Maricopa County, respectively the state capital and most populous county in Arizona, the Maricopa County Courthouse is representative of the dominance exerted by the City of Phoenix and Maricopa County over statewide political and governmental affairs. The building is considered to possess importance at the statewide level during the period from 1928 to 1938.

The building is also eligible for the National Register under criterion "C" as a major expression of Eclectic and Period Revival design in the late 1920s. Intended to be a monumental achievement, the building was designed by Edward F. Neild, a prominent Shreveport, Louisiana, architect, in collaboration with the respected Phoenix architectural firm of Lescher and Mahoney. The building is a noteworthy work of these two firms and is significant on a statewide level because of the preeminence of Lescher and Mahoney as the dominant firm in the design of public buildings throughout Arizona at that time.

APPLICABLE CONTEXTS

Two historic contexts are directly applicable to the Maricopa County Courthouse. Both contexts are at the state level. Context one is "the development and maturation of local government in Arizona during the late 1920s and early 1930s." Context two is "Eclectic and Period Revival architecture in Arizona during the late 1920s."

☒ See continuation sheet

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CONTEXT ONE

The Development and Maturation of Local Government in Arizona During the Late 1920s and Early 1930s

The construction of the Maricopa County Courthouse represents the maturation of city and county governments that occurred in Arizona during the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century. From humble beginnings, city and county governments grew to meet the burgeoning needs of an expanding population. The Maricopa County Courthouse and Phoenix City Hall is the architectural manifestation of this important development in Arizona history.

The construction of county courthouses correlates to Arizona Territory legislation enacted in 1871 requiring each county to construct a courthouse and to maintain a suitable jail. In a sometimes turbulent era, these civil structures were deemed absolute necessities. At first, most county operations were housed in various temporary quarters. Later, as the counties became more prosperous, permanent facilities were constructed. Concerns about county facilities culminated shortly after the turn of the century. By 1909, the original four counties had been subdivided into fourteen (a fifteenth was created on January 1, 1983). In the years between 1895 and 1918, ten Arizona counties erected courthouses to provide expanded facilities and replace earlier, temporary quarters. This initial era attests to the expanding population of the territory and the state, and to the increasing importance and stability of local government.

The Maricopa County Courthouse represents a later era. Completed in 1929, the building is indicative of the maturation of local government in the state's rapidly expanding urban areas. By the late 1920s, the communities of Phoenix and Tucson were well established as centers of population and political control in the central and southern sectors of the state. Concomitant with the increased responsibilities of local government officials was a realization that the seat of local political power required an edifice of monumental proportions. The Pima County Courthouse (constructed 1929, National Register listed June 23, 1978) and the Maricopa County Courthouse represent the culmination of political evolution for the state's two major urban areas. In a statewide context, the Maricopa County Courthouse reflects the maturation and growth of the State of Arizona and the City of Phoenix during the decades prior to World War II.

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County History

Maricopa County was created from the subdivision of one of the original four counties (Yavapai, Mojave, Yuma and Pima) established in 1864 after Arizona became a territory in 1863. Because of a growing population in the Salt River valley and because of long distances to the previous county seat at Prescott, the territorial legislature created Maricopa County in 1871 from a portion of Yavapai County. Voters selected Phoenix as the seat of the new county. A portion of Pima County was added two years later, placing the entire Salt River valley under unified political control.

The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors first met on February 28, 1871, in a building known as Hancock's Store at the corner of what is now Washington and First streets. This was a one-story adobe building with earth floors and a roof of cottonwood poles and arrowweeds. Later that year, the board moved to another adobe building, this one located at the corner of Washington Street and First Avenue and known as the Hancock-Monihon Building. This larger building served as a house of worship when it was not being used for county business.

The county purchased its first building on July 6, 1875, from Michael and Morris Goldwater. Known as the Clementia property, this adobe building was located on the south side of Washington Street between what is now Central Avenue and First Street. The building, formerly a store, housed the offices of the board of supervisors, clerk, probate judge, recorder, treasurer, and sheriff. The one-story building contained a central court room that was surrounded by offices. A jail, which consisted of a row of adobe cells set into a high adobe wall, was located at the rear of the building. Prior to the construction of the jail, prisoners were chained to a heavy rock "deadman" while awaiting trial.

The board soon began plans for a permanent county building. On March 10, 1879, the board directed the county clerk to advertise for plans and specifications for a new building to cost \$28,000. The board approved the plans of A. P. Petit on August 5, 1879, but on September 1 reconsidered their decision and decided not to build. A second false start occurred on July 6, 1881, when the board accepted the plans for a new courthouse designed by H. R. Patrick; on August 28 the supervisors again decided not to proceed with the construction.

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The territorial legislature then stepped forward. On January 27, 1883, it passed an act directing Maricopa County to erect a courthouse in Block 76 of the original townsite. The property had been set aside for county use when the original Phoenix townsite was patented on April 10, 1874. Governor John Fremont approved a \$25,000 territorial appropriation for the building. The county also sold bonds and used the proceeds from the sale of the old courthouse to complete the construction.

On February 12, 1883, the board advertised for plans and specifications that would be used for the new building. The advertisement stated that the building must be constructed of brick, contain both a courthouse and a jail, be two stories high, and contain the offices of the district judge, district attorney, clerk of the district court, and board of supervisors. The board accepted the plans of Frank Walker, who had designed the Cochise County Courthouse in Tombstone. Although Walker was initially appointed superintending architect, he was succeeded by H. R. Patrick on July 6, 1883.

The original Maricopa County Courthouse, completed in 1884, was a dominant landmark in Phoenix for the next forty-four years. The imposing brick building, two stories high above a basement, was constructed in a long rectangle oriented north and south with shallow wings east and west, forming a cross. A low pitched gable roof led to a central clock tower. Steps rose on three sides of the building, and the main entrance on Washington Street featured a pillared portico. The jail had heavy brick walls lined with pine lumber spiked together in a manner designed to frustrate the escape of prisoners.

City History

The origin of the City of Phoenix is generally accepted as beginning with the establishment of a permanent camp by John Y. T. Smith near the Salt River in 1865. On May 4, 1868, Phoenix was first recognized as a political entity when the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors created an election precinct at Phoenix Settlement. The settlement was located near John Swilling's irrigation canal, the Salt River valley's first historic-era canal. The Valley also was opened to homesteading in 1868 and by October 20, 1870, Valley settlers had formed the Salt River Valley Town Association.

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The movement to erect a city hall in Phoenix began during the administration of Mayor DeForest Porter in 1887. The city council passed an ordinance on May 25, 1887, authorizing the issuance of bonds for the construction of a city hall. It was to be located on the block bounded by Washington, Jefferson, First, and Second streets known as the "Plaza". In September, the mayor and council approved a sketch by councilman Fowler and authorized architect James Creighton to prepare plans and specifications based on the Fowler sketch. A construction contract in the amount of \$15,580 was awarded to John J. Gardiner on November 15, 1887, and five days later Gardiner commenced work on the building. By July 2, 1888, the building was completed and presented to city officials.

The building provided much needed space for municipal functions during the initial years of Phoenix. The city hall served the citizens of Phoenix for the next forty years. The building served the citizens of the state as well, for it housed the offices of the territorial government from 1889 to 1901. The new capitol was completed in 1901.

The Maturation of Phoenix

Phoenix and Maricopa County experienced steady if not speedy growth from the 1880s until the second decade of the twentieth century. In 1911, Roosevelt Dam was completed on the Salt River, regulating its flows, assuring a stable water supply, and bringing life-giving water to the agricultural lands in the Valley. In 1912 Arizona achieved statehood. These two events ushered in an expansive period of prosperity and growth for the Salt River valley. From a sleepy town with a population of 11,134 in 1910, Phoenix grew to 48,118 residents by 1930.

This twenty-year period also saw the architectural evolution of Phoenix, as many new buildings were constructed. The town changed from a small agricultural village to the dominant urban center of Arizona. The central business district witnessed an increase in the size and height of commercial office buildings and hotels. Eight high-rise buildings (six stories or more) were constructed in the downtown core during the 1920s and early 1930s. Many smaller buildings filled in the fabric of the urban streetscape. Dominant commercial buildings constructed during this era include the Westward Ho Hotel (1929), the Luhr's Building (1924), the Luhr's Tower (1929), and the Title and Trust Building (1931).

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By this time, both the county and city administration buildings were overcrowded, having been built in a different era. The earlier facilities were no longer adequate to meet the needs of a mature urban center. On April 28, 1927, the board of supervisors passed a resolution stating that the current courthouse and jail were inadequate, that additional space was needed for county departments, and that additions to the 1884 courthouse would be wasteful and create fire hazards.

Local government leaders recognized the need for a building worthy of the aspirations of the community, and the board of supervisors called for an election on May 21, 1927, for the purpose of issuing bonds in the amount of \$750,000 for the construction of a new building on Block 76 (the same site as the 1884 courthouse). The citizens of Maricopa County approved the measure by a vote of 3,489 to 780. On June 15, 1927, the board announced a competition for the selection of an architect for the building. The board issued a notice for the sale of the bonds on June 16, 1927, and bids were opened on July 18. Nine investment firms and banks bid on the bonds; the Valley Bank of Phoenix was the successful bidder.

The City of Phoenix was also interested in expanding its facilities and saw the proposal for a new courthouse as an opportunity to construct a new city hall. The idea for a joint county-city building received its major impetus from a group of reform-minded citizens. On March 16, 1927, Judge Frank O. Smith spoke to the city commission on behalf of a Phoenix Chamber of Commerce committee that supported a joint building. Judge Smith spoke to the commission again on May 4, and on May 9 the board of supervisors sent the city a letter expressing a desire and intent to cooperate on a joint building. The chamber of commerce urged the county and city leaders to construct a building worthy of the dominant position Phoenix held in the state.

On May 11, 1927, Mayor Jefferson stated that he felt the city and county should "work hand and glove on this matter." Board chairman Phillips expressed the general sentiment that the city and county work together on the venture, and a meeting of the two governmental bodies was set for May 12. Judge Smith and his chamber of commerce committee kept up a steady pressure on the city to work with the county to construct a joint building. Smith appeared before the commission several times and urged for prompt action.

On June 8, 1927, an appraisal of Block 76 was ordered by the board, and on June 15 the appraisal report valued the land as follows:

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the west third was worth \$150,000, the center third \$100,000, and the east third \$200,000. On June 20, 1927, the board of supervisors accepted an option from the city for the west third of the property for the construction of a new city hall. On July 8, 1927, the city commission passed Ordinance 986, calling for a special bond election in the amount of \$450,000 to purchase the west third of Block 76 and to build the new city hall. The election was held on August 16, 1927, and the city residents voted 460 to 164 in favor of expending \$150,000 to purchase the land, \$250,000 to construct the new building, and \$50,000 to purchase equipment.

Design and Construction

In the meantime, the board of supervisors began its homework. Several members conducted a fact-finding tour of eastern and southern states during the summer of 1927 to evaluate the state of the art in courthouse construction. They met with other boards and commissions, and toured government facilities of all types. Armed with this information, the board was ready to select an architect from the seven aspirants in the design competition. On September 15, the board began consideration of plans for the new building.

Several prominent architects and architectural firms submitted plans for the building. Included were William N. Bowman of Denver, Fitzhugh and Byron of Phoenix, Lescher and Mahoney of Phoenix, Edward F. Neild of Shreveport, Henry T. Phelps of San Antonio, Trost and Trost of El Paso, and V. O. Wallingford of Phoenix. Wallingford was widely known in the state for his architectural activities; Lescher and Mahoney were prominent designers of schools and public buildings; Bowman had designed the Yavapai County Courthouse; Trost and Trost were well known and had designed the Luhr's Building; and Neild was the architect for the Caddo Parish Courthouse in Shreveport, Louisiana, which favorably impressed the supervisors during their tour. Each architect submitted plans and described its particular attributes.

After considerable debate, the supervisors continued the decision until the next meeting. On September 19, 1927, the board decided to select the plans and specifications of Edward F. Neild. Neild received the votes of S. K. Phillips and J. T. Bone; A. G. Austin voted for William N. Bowman. The decision was not without controversy -- the City of Phoenix supported the local architectural firm of Lescher and Mahoney. The board stated that "this decision was reached after thoughtful consideration of a number of architects of wide experience."

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With regard to Neild, the board stated:

"The reputation of Mr. Neild as an experienced architect, in designing courthouses and other large structures came to the board several months ago from a large number of sources. The board took occasion to ascertain the facts regarding his ability as an architect as well to examine a number of his buildings, which speak more eloquently than words, of his knowledge of courthouse designing. In support of his ability as an architect, it was found in conferring with commissioners and boards under whom he worked that he always kept the building within the money provided for the purpose, which is a very important consideration, inasmuch as our funds are barely ample to carry out the plans." (*Arizona Republican*, September 20, 1927)

Two days later, the board and city officials worked to reduce the differences between the two parties. Board chairman S. K. Phillips stated, "The selection of Edward F. Neild as our architect will not serve as a bar to the erection of a joint administration building." Phoenix city manager Henry Rieger also expressed a desire to put the differences of the two government entities behind them. He noted that "the city commission and other municipal officers have favored the selection of a local architect for city plans," but "will be glad to collaborate with Mr. Neild, the county's architect, in 'hooking up' plans and specifications for the joint building."

On October 24, 1927, a tentative contract with the city for the construction of the building was approved, and on April 19, 1928, the city took possession of the west third of Block 76 in the original townsite. Phoenix selected the architectural firm of Lescher and Mahoney to design their portion of the joint building with little fanfare or controversy, and on November 8, 1927, signed a contract with the firm. Since Neild was the county architect, the contract called for the design of the building to be under his supervision and for the building to have unified exterior appearance. However, Lescher and Mahoney added some special touches to the exterior of the Phoenix City Hall portion and were largely responsible for its ornate interiors.

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On April 5, 1928, the board called for sealed bids to select a general contractor for the building. Fourteen bids were received from construction firms throughout the West. The construction contract was awarded on May 28, 1928, to the Los Angeles firm of Edwards, Wildey and Dixon. When making the selection, the board noted that it was particularly impressed with the firm's work on the Security-Pacific Building, recently completed in downtown Phoenix.

Other contracts were awarded by the board to English Electric Company (electrical wiring), F. D. Reed Plumbing Company (plumbing), Elliot Engineering (heating and ventilating), Southern Prison Company (jail equipment), J. D. Halsted Lumber Company (hardware), O. B. Marston Company (vault doors), and Baker Iron Works (elevators).

The contract award process did not always go smoothly. When bidding the contract for furniture and light fixtures, the board called for bids without waiting for architect Neild to complete the specifications. The request also called for the contractor to supply the highest quality merchandise for the sum of \$47,000, no more and no less. Berryhill Office Equipment Company brought suit in Maricopa County Superior Court, alleging that the county had failed to follow prescribed bidding practices by not having specifications on file during the bidding period and not calling for a lowest and best bid.

Although Superior Court Judge Joseph S. Jenckes held in favor of the county, Berryhill appealed the case to the Arizona Supreme Court. On April 4, 1929, the court ruled that the county had failed to follow proper bidding procedures (Berryhill Office Equipment Co. et al. vs. Phillips et al., 276 Pac. 4). The county was required to go through the bidding process again, this time with careful attention to detail. Not surprisingly, Berryhill was not among the successful bidders. On June 14, 1929, the county awarded contracts to C. F. Weber (metal furniture), Newton & Hoit (wood furniture), and Bailey-Reynolds Chandelier Company (light fixtures).

On November 11, 1928, the city commission and the board of supervisors hosted a dedication ceremony conducted by the Arizona Grand Lodge of Masons. At this time the building was half completed. The festivities included a parade from the Masonic Temple. Judge Frank O. Smith, who spearheaded the initial drive for a joint

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building, served as master of ceremonies and introduced the main speakers. The occasion was highlighted by United States Senator Carl Hayden (acting Grand Orator of the Grand Lodge) and by Col. John Philip Sousa (conductor of the Marine Corps Band).

Hayden gave a history of the Masonic Order and noted that Masonic member George Washington had laid the cornerstone of the national capitol. "I hope," he said, "that the present building, like the ancient cathedrals, will grace the spot for many years and that it will be a building for free people and the preservation of freedom." He also outlined the history of county buildings in Phoenix and closed with a declaration that the Grand Masonic Lodge of Arizona was "proud to have taken a part in the erection of such a building." For his part, Sousa merely acknowledged the small crowd (construction fences were still in place) by saying simply "I thank you."

A cornerstone of polished Arizona granite was laid in the northeast corner of the building. A small capsule made of native Arizona copper and containing copies of current county newspapers and magazines, copies of documents pertaining to the construction of the building, a photograph of the 1888 City Hall, a map showing the location of prehistoric irrigation systems in the county, and various emblems and coins was placed behind it. Lloyd C. Henning, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Arizona, F. and A. M., mortared it into place with a silver trowel. The cornerstone carries the names of the county supervisors, architect, contractors, and Grand Master of the Masonic Lodge, along with the date 1928.

The building was originally scheduled to be completed by April 1, 1929, but its progress was slowed by normal construction delays and the lawsuit. On June 21, 1929, architect Neild reported favorably on the installation of the jail equipment, one of the most critical elements in the building. His representative in Phoenix, Perry Bridges, completed a final inspection on June 22, 1929, and reported the building fit for occupancy. The board of supervisors accepted the report and formally took possession of the building on June 23. Total cost for both the city and county portions was \$1,200,000.

Government/Political Associations

The city portion housed all city offices and the county portion housed all the county offices and courts, and a jail on the fifth and sixth floors. The construction of the building enabled both

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government entities ample office space to handle the many chores involved with governing a large population and geographic area.

In contrast to most county courthouses in Arizona, the Maricopa County Courthouse represents the maturation rather than the beginnings of local government in the state. Most courthouses were constructed during the initial years following the establishment of county government. The Maricopa County Courthouse represents a second era -- one that exemplifies the maturation and growth of the city and county, as well as the state as a whole.

The construction of the joint county-city administration building reflects the increasing importance of local government in Arizona at a time of major economic growth. As the state became more responsible for the administration of government on a broad basis, particularly in rural areas, city and county government in the prosperous and populous Salt River valley took up a greater proportion of the everyday tasks necessary for a stable society. That the building correlates with these increased political and economic responsibilities is evidenced by its monumental architecture.

All important county and city business was conducted within the building. One of the most important functions was the administration of justice. The building housed the City Justice of the Peace Court and the Maricopa County Superior Court. Over the years, literally thousands of significant legal decisions were rendered in the building.

Among the major cases tried in the Maricopa County Courthouse was one that led to the landmark United States Supreme Court ruling known as the "Miranda Decision." Although this case took place after the historic period of significance for the building (limited to 1928-1938 for the purposes of the National Register), it is, nonetheless, an excellent example of the important role the building played in local government.

In the early 1960s, Ernesto Miranda was awakened by Phoenix police and taken to their headquarters for questioning. He was accused of robbery and was also told that he was a suspect in a kidnap/rape case as well. Forced to go through a police lineup, Miranda was refused the opportunity to seek legal counsel. In addition, at his preliminary hearing, his request for the court to appoint a lawyer on his behalf was refused. Even though he was afforded an attorney

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when his case was tried in the Maricopa Superior Court, it was to little avail. He was convicted of rape, kidnap, and robbery.

The case was eventually appealed to the United States Supreme Court. The focus of the appeal was the failure of the government to afford Miranda legal representation and to inform him of his rights. The appeal was successful, and in 1966 the court handed down its famous ruling. Scholars in history and law have postulated that this is one of the most important legal decisions in the entire history of American law.

Miranda was eventually freed, only to be attacked and knifed to death in a barroom brawl several years later. However, his name lives on in judicial and civil rights history. A poll taken by the American Bar Association in 1976 ranked the case fourth in importance in the entire history of the United States Supreme Court. This landmark case was first tried in the ornate courtrooms of the Maricopa County Courthouse.

By the 1950s, the needs of the City of Phoenix and Maricopa County expanded to such an extent that the old building was no longer able to meet the demands for which it was built. Arizona experienced a dramatic expansion in population in the years following World War II. Population in Phoenix grew from 65,414 in 1940 to 241,899 in 1960, and the area within the city limits grew from 9.6 to 52.6 square miles. This later period represents the growth of modern Arizona as it is known today. The structures associated with its historic era of maturation no longer seemed viable.

As early as 1949, Phoenix city officials began to explore options for a new city hall. Their need for additional space was such that the city wanted a new building for its exclusive use. By the late 1950s, the needs reached pressing proportions. In April 1957, city voters authorized \$4.3 million for the construction of a new city hall. The old city portion of the Maricopa County Courthouse, constructed when the city population was one-eighth of its 1957 size, was entirely inadequate.

The new Phoenix Municipal Building was completed in 1963 and is a modern ten-story concrete structure faced with precast concrete, white quartz aggregate panels. It is located on the block immediately west of the Maricopa County Courthouse and Phoenix City Hall. Directly south of the new building is the one-story Council Chambers, a building 80 feet in diameter.

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Maricopa County also grew out of the old courthouse in the early 1960s. In 1964, the Maricopa County Governmental Complex was completed. Of modern design, it contains of the Superior Court Building (9 stories), the Sheriff's Office and Jail (5 stories), the Supervisors' Auditorium (1 story), and the Administration Building (6 stories). Architects Stephen, Walsh, Emmons, and Shanks designed the \$11 million complex.

Although local government in Arizona has shifted from a period of initial maturity to one of continued growth, the old Maricopa County Courthouse is still seeing active service, and plans are underway to begin the total restoration of the building.

CONTEXT TWO

Eclectic and Period Revival Architecture in Arizona During the Late 1920s

The Period Revival style of architecture gained statewide importance in Arizona during the late 1920s. In residential housing, designs shifted from Bungalow styles to Period Revival styles in the Mission, Spanish Colonial, and Tudor expressions. For commercial and public buildings, predominately Neoclassical styles were replaced by Moderne, Renaissance, Spanish Colonial, and Mission styles.

Although the late 1920s and early 1930s saw the construction of numerous residential and commercial buildings in Period Revival styles, the construction of public buildings in these styles was rare. In Phoenix, only the Spanish Colonial Revival style United States Post Office (constructed 1932-1936, National Register listed) and the Maricopa County Courthouse departed from fairly standard Neoclassic designs. Although the Phoenix architectural firm of Lescher and Mahoney was largely responsible for public buildings in Arizona, the unique design of the Maricopa County Courthouse was the work of Shreveport, Louisiana, architect Edward F. Neild.

The building is the only known work by Neild in Arizona. He first rose to prominence by designing schools in Louisiana. By 1928, he had completed the C. E. Bird High School and the Louisiana Avenue School in Shreveport and had completed the design for a junior high school in Baton Rouge. These buildings are essentially Neoclassical, but they show other Period Revival-style motifs.

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Based on this early success, Neild was selected to design the Caddo Parish Courthouse in Shreveport, Louisiana. Completed in 1928, the building still retains strong classical emphasis; but the effect is lightened measurably by the inclusion of Period Revival and Moderne details, and the overall form of the building is atypical for the style. The Maricopa County Courthouse is strongly reminiscent of the Caddo Parish Courthouse, but Neild was much more flamboyant with his integration of Period Revival and Moderne influences, as well as Southwestern regional elements, such as spanish tile on the roof. The resulting building has numerous references to several stylistic trends and illustrates the eclectic blending of form and materials found in progressive buildings of the late 1920s.

In later years, Neild expanded his practice to include other types of buildings but still concentrated on public construction. One of his most important later projects is the Louisiana State Exhibit Building in Baton Rouge. Constructed to house permanent exhibits at the site of the Louisiana State Fair, the building was designed by Neild in association with his son, Edward F. Neild, Jr., and D. A. Somdal. The main exhibit building is a huge circular structure, 116 feet in diameter, with two subsidiary wings housing a museum and auditorium.

The firm of Lescher and Mahoney, initially Lescher and Kibbey, was established in Phoenix in 1912 and grew rapidly into statewide prominence. The vast majority of its early work centered on public buildings, including schools and courthouses. After 1930 its major projects shifted to commercial commissions, primarily in Phoenix. The firm worked in numerous styles, conforming to trends of the time. Major buildings in the early years were predominantly Neoclassic in style. This period is represented by the Mohave County Courthouse (1912) in Kingman, the Graham County Courthouse (1916) in Safford, and the Florence High School (1916). These buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Lescher and Mahoney was extremely active around the state. Between 1912 and 1941, it completed eighty elementary schools in small communities. During the 1930s, the firm's work on elementary schools declined and on high schools increased. In total, Lescher and Mahoney designed 132 major school buildings in Arizona, primarily in the 1920-1940 period.

By the mid-twenties the firm's work shifted toward Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission Revival forms, often retaining the formality

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and symmetry associated with the preceding Neoclassic and Renaissance Revival forms. It was also in this period that the firm became more active in commercial buildings, capitalizing on its growing reputation. The departure from the Neoclassic designs is indicated by the Spanish Colonial Revival Orpheum Theatre (1928). The stylistic shift continued with the Moderne style Title and Trust Building (1931) and was essentially complete with the International style Hanny's Building (1947). Stylistically, these later buildings combine Neoclassic, Mission, Spanish Colonial, Moderne, and International motifs. All of these buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The collaboration of Edward F. Neild and Lescher and Mahoney on the Maricopa County Courthouse resulted in a well-designed and constructed building that has served its community well for over half of a century and has become a focal point in the downtown Phoenix streetscape of high-rise modern buildings.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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☒ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository:

Arizona SHPO

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1.9

UTM References

A 12 400100 3701280
Zone Easting Northing

C

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

☒ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gerald A. Doyle, FAIA

organization Gerald A. Doyle & Associates, P.C. date October 7, 1988

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city or town Phoenix, Arizona state Arizona zip code 85014

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the nominated property is described as the boundaries of Block 76 of the original Phoenix townsite. These boundaries are further described as follows: Beginning at the intersection of the south curb line of Washington Street and the east curb line of Second Avenue in Phoenix, thence east along the south curb line of Washington Street to the west curb line of First Avenue, thence south along west curb line of First Avenue to the north curb line of Jefferson Street, thence west along the north curb line of Jefferson Street to the east curb line of Second Avenue, thence north along east curb line of Second Avenue to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of the nominated property are identical to the boundaries of Block 76 of the original Phoenix townsite. Block 76 was first set aside for county government purposes when the original Phoenix townsite was patented on April 10, 1874. Block 76 was the location of the first Maricopa County Courthouse constructed by the county in 1884. When the 1884 courthouse was demolished, the nominated property was constructed in 1928-1929. During the historic period, this site has always been identified with Maricopa County government.

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List of Photographs

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Maricopa County Courthouse
Phoenix, Arizona
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates
May 1988
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates

1. View toward northeast corner of building with main (north) facade at center of photograph.

Photograph 1 of 8

Maricopa County Courthouse
Phoenix, Arizona
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates
May 1988
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates

2. Main (north) facade showing Maricopa County Courthouse entrance. Phoenix City Hall is at right. View looking southwest.

Photograph 2 of 8

Maricopa County Courthouse
Phoenix, Arizona
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates
May 1988
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates

3. West elevation of building showing main facade of Phoenix City Hall. View looking southeast.

Photograph 3 of 8

Maricopa County Courthouse
Phoenix, Arizona
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates
May 1988
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates

4. Partial west facade with detail of Phoenix City Hall entrance. View looking east.

Photograph 4 of 8

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Maricopa County Courthouse
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Gerald A. Doyle & Associates
May 1988
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5. South (rear) elevation. Phoenix City Hall is at left. View looking northwest.

Photograph 5 of 8

Maricopa County Courthouse
Phoenix, Arizona
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates
May 1988
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates

6. East face of cornerstone at northeast corner of building. View looking west.

Photograph 6 of 8

Maricopa County Courthouse
Phoenix, Arizona
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates
May 1988
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates

7. North face of cornerstone at northeast corner of building. View looking south.

Photograph 7 of 8

Maricopa County Courthouse
Phoenix, Arizona
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates
May 1988
Gerald A. Doyle & Associates

8. Typical courtroom.

Photograph 8 of 8

